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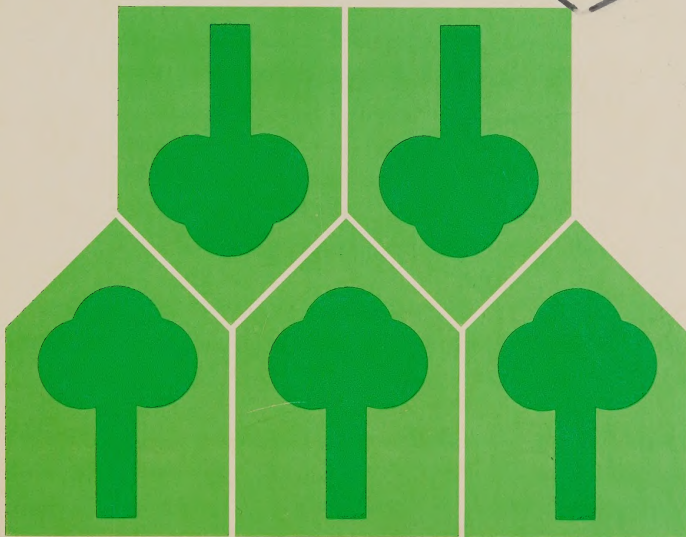


Ministry of State
Urban Affairs Canada

Ministère d'État
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1 urban challenge

Triggered by industrialization, hastened by postwar economic growth, urbanization in Canada has brought three out of every four Canadians to cities and towns. And one of every two urban dwellers congregates in or near three principal metropolitan regions: Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal.

From a predominantly rural nation 50 years ago, Canada has become one of the world's most urbanized countries. The challenge of this rapid shift of population, of the increased demand for public utilities, housing and transportation, social services, education and cultural facilities calls for complex and far-reaching responses from planners, developers, and public administrators. The strain on facilities, the drain on the public purse, the private distress of crowding and of the rising cost of accommodation are some of the major concerns today for Canadian citizens and their governments.

The work of the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs during the fiscal year 1974-75 focussed on defining and formulating a set of national objectives for Canada's future urban development, a range of options for achieving them, and a plan for country-wide consultation and coordination of efforts in implementing the preferred course of action.

all affected by the pressures of metropolitan growth. Thirdly the focus was to be upon the quality of urban life and on improvement of the urban environment: renovation and restoration of old neighborhoods, the creation and preservation of open spaces, the conversion of valuable waterfront and downtown land to community use.

By the spring of 1975, discussions had been initiated with the provinces on the various options for a national urban pattern within the context of the federal green paper on immigration and population.

2 framework for the future

Growing awareness in recent years of the impact of urbanization on population distribution, on the urban environment and on the economic and political life of the country pointed toward the need for an agreed-upon strategy to manage urban growth.

Policy planning efforts were directed toward achieving a more balanced pattern of urban growth in Canada by changing the present trend of concentration in a dozen urban centres. Next came the need to manage metropolitan growth, to bolster economic opportunity as well as social, cultural and recreational facilities, public transportation and low-cost housing;

3 mechanisms for entente

Urban issues are often complex and closely inter-related, cutting across jurisdictional lines. Since its inception, the Ministry has striven to bridge the differences through an interdisciplinary approach and the development of an effective process of interdepartmental and intergovernmental consultation and coordination. Together, the appropriate agencies, ministers and officials identify and analyse the issues, define alternative solutions and ensure follow-up. The development of this process has been and continues to be a high priority of the Ministry.

Progress achieved during the year under review opened the way for the far-ranging activity that lies ahead: new mechanisms were developed for vital consultation and cooperation — new methods were devised to estimate the effectiveness of proposed public policy, to assess the urban impact of manifold government and private initiatives — new agreements were concluded, new legislation was enacted to deal with specific or special concerns at the national, regional and local level. And the Ministry participated increasingly with interdepartmental and international bodies dedicated to the solution of problems connected with urbanization and urban growth.

Interdepartmental cooperation has been formalized, at the federal level, through the creation of SIDCUA, the Senior Interdepartmental Committee on Urban Affairs, made up of the deputy heads of 15 departments and agencies.

Through SIDCUA, the federal government and agencies are kept informed of the work of the Ministry and on intergovernmental cooperation in urban matters. This committee is an essential mechanism for integrating policy development and cooperative action by federal departments within the broader context of federal urban policies and programs.

In 1974-75, SIDCUA focused on preparations for the Canadian urban strategy.

Two national tri-level conferences have been held, in 1972 and 1973. At the latter meeting, it was

suggested that such national tri-level meetings should constitute a forum where critical urban issues of a nation-wide importance are discussed. Emphasis in 1974-75 was on background preparations for a third such conference.

The three co-chairmen, representing the federal government, the provinces and municipalities of Canada, together with their officials met several times to discuss an agenda, a date and place for National Tri-Level Conference III.

Provincial and metropolitan tri-level and bi-level committees, task forces and ad hoc groups have been formed across the country and their work will be discussed in the context of particular urban issues.

In particular, as an outcome of the 1973 conference, a tri-level task force on municipal finance was set up in June 1974 and will present a report at the next National Tri-Level Conference. The work of the task force has been supported by representatives of the Ministry and of the Department of Finance.

4 ministry activities: 1974-75

MANAGEMENT OF URBAN GROWTH

While options for a national urban strategy were being developed, the problems of growth confronted individual communities and regions. In 1974-75, MSUA assisted several provinces in resolving more immediate urban problems, or in designing strategies for longer-term regional and local development.

For example, MSUA has contributed technical advice and a grant of \$275,000 to the Greater Vancouver Regional District toward development of the Livable Region Program. The program is intended for implementation over the decade between 1976 and 1986, and calls for management of the city's growth by channelling new industry and residential communities to regional town centres. It will involve close cooperation and consultation among the three levels of government. The program and its implications were discussed at a Vancouver Tri-Level meeting in December 1974, and program details were published shortly afterwards.

On the Prairies, intergovernmental committees established between 1972 and 1975 have proved to be important avenues for consultation and cooperative planning. The Winnipeg Tri-Level committee, set up in April 1972, pioneered this approach for MSUA. The committee, meeting monthly in 1974-75, focused on issues of urban growth management, inner city development, location of major government office buildings, transportation and rail relocation.

In Saskatchewan, Canada's first bi-level body on urban affairs, the MSUA-Province of Saskatchewan committee, was set up in September, 1974. Over the year, the committee has concerned itself with broad urban matters affecting many areas of the province such as rail relocation, growth management and opportunities for redevelopment of the urban core.

In the Atlantic Region, both Saint John and Moncton, N.B., will use urban design guidelines to plan their future development. In 1974, the Saint

John Central Area Urban Design was completed with funds provided by the Ministry. The design now is being put to use in planning the Market Square project, a major civic commercial complex in downtown Saint John. An urban design for downtown Moncton was also completed in 1975 under a Ministry grant to the city.

During the year, the Quebec Urban Community Planning Commission completed preparation of a regional growth plan with a \$200,000 grant from the Ministry, and in December, 1974, the first draft was presented for public discussion.

URBAN MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM

This program was established by the Ministry to help municipal government executives and managers enlarge their skills for coping with the many complex issues associated with urbanization. The annual budget of \$500,000 is allocated to projects that have been chosen through consultation between the Ministry, provincial authorities and municipal organizations. Discussions late in the fiscal year led to the award of contracts for the development of course material, continuing education workshops and management tools such as a municipal management inventory system, a national information clearing house and a management resource needs study.

IMPROVED URBAN ENVIRONMENT

The Ministry undertook a number of studies to better understand Canadian urban problems and to recommend ways and means of overcoming them. Researchers continued to look at the part new communities play in accommodating urban growth. Their studies consider the possible federal roles in developing these new urban centres, and their financial and social implications. Britain, like Canada, is faced with the problems produced by its burgeoning cities, and has

tested the concept of new communities. The governments of both countries have agreed to share information related to new communities development, financing, policy and programs.

The problems faced by the older, inner city neighborhoods in adjusting to changing social demands have also been the subject of Ministry policy studies. These have found that residential neighborhoods vary widely in their problems and future prospects. Effective government programs must be tailored to meet these variations. For example, the physical fabric of the inner city neighborhood may be sound but the social fabric may be under stress as middle income families, returning to the city from suburbia, displace disadvantaged residents in the urban core.

The Ministry is proposing a variety of government actions and programs to take into account these differences in the process of neighborhood change. A report exploring the inner city issues was published, and a film produced to stimulate public dialogue on workable solutions.

Other studies undertaken during the year focused on a wide range of topics, including women's concerns with conditions in Canadian cities, development of a set of urban indicators to measure the quality of life in urban areas, factors contributing to the quality of life in resource communities and the physiological effects of living in different types of housing and at varying densities. An urban bikeway design competition also was launched during the year to encourage interest in this low-cost and popular way of enhancing the city environment.

Often, the key to solving many urban problems is cooperation between the levels and agencies of government. Moreover, this pooling of governments' perceptions and experiences can produce results that are both exciting and practical. One such result is Regina's railway relocation project, under municipal consideration for many years. Out of the Regina tri-

level committee established in December 1974 grew the idea of an international competition to develop new and practical proposals for the 114 acres of railway land in downtown Regina. The Ministry underscored its commitment by contributing \$100,000 in prize money for the outstanding design submissions.

In Calgary, an intergovernmental committee has advertised a national contest for creative proposals on how to develop 400 acres of publicly-held land.

The Urbex projects are another focus of federal-provincial-municipal interest and cooperation. These experimental urban redevelopment schemes entail recycling federal properties to serve community purposes. Studies were carried out for Urbex schemes in Toronto and St. John's, Nfld., during the fiscal year. Quebec City brought its projects closer to realization through a predevelopment agreement for a major, mixed-use waterfront complex. The Quebec agreement involves the National Harbours Board, the Canadian National Railways, and the departments of Regional Economic Expansion and Public Works.

In recent years, urban port facilities, like downtown railway operations, have presented planners at all levels of government with both problems and opportunities. The size of modern cargo ships and changed cargo-handling technology demand more deep-water terminals, large areas of land for terminal facilities and easy access to rail and road transport. These requirements have often proved difficult to provide in many older port locations. During 1974-75, the Ministry was involved in intergovernmental planning committees for harborfront redevelopment in Vancouver, Thunder Bay and Toronto.

The Toronto project is an especially ambitious and innovative one, with the Ministry playing a leading part. The Central Waterfront Area of Toronto includes a six-mile stretch of waterfront and encompasses Toronto Bay and some 2,600 acres of surrounding land. The area takes in the Port of Toronto, major industrial and recreational areas and transport

facilities. Most of the land is publicly-owned with a variety of government agencies and levels of government responsible for planning and development. In mid-1973, the Central Waterfront Planning Committee was established to guide preparation of an official redevelopment plan, with the Ministry representing the federal government.

Of particular interest is the 86-acre harborfront site acquired by the federal government in 1972. The Ministry is coordinating intergovernmental planning for the site and the development of programs for public use of the harborfront while long-term plans are being evolved. During 1974, a summer program was launched on the newly-landscaped site, featuring concerts, theatre, playgrounds, a coffee house and a day care centre. It attracted some 500,000 people. Public meetings in 1975 brought overwhelming consensus from Torontonians for keeping Harbourfront plans simple and allowing site development to be determined, gradually, by community needs.

FEDERAL LAND USE

The federal government owns substantial amounts of land throughout all 10 provinces. Much of it (by latest reckoning 200,000 acres) is strategically located in urban areas. Examples include the Downsview properties, 900 acres in the middle of Metropolitan Toronto; the Welland and Lachine canals, declared surplus by the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority — the former running through the centre of a medium sized city, the latter bisecting the southern tip of the Island of Montreal. These and other lands can provide a range of development opportunities — for example, housing, recreation, transportation corridors — to improve the urban environment, especially when individual federal departments and agencies no longer require the property.

Until recently the management of such lands — acquisition, use and disposal — responded basically to

market economy forces; land was bought and sold according to commercial criteria. In July, 1973, Cabinet approved a fundamentally new approach to the management of federally-owned lands. The current policy is based on the principle that federal lands should be managed so as to provide efficient government services and achieve wider social, economic and environmental objectives.

In general, the acquisition, use and disposal of federal lands are examined in the light of the current and anticipated needs of individual program agencies and against local, regional and national urban objectives and growth strategies.

In 1974-75, a Treasury Board Advisory Committee on Federal Land Management was established under the chairmanship of the Treasury Board Secretariat. It will review policies, guidelines, procedures and proposals for the acquisition, change in use and disposal of federal real property. Regular members of the committee include senior officials of the Ministry of State for Urban Affairs, the Department of the Environment, the Department of Public Works, and Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Other departments and agencies participate on an agenda basis. Under the guidance of this Advisory Committee, a number of intergovernmental bodies were set up to carry out studies on land surplus to federal needs. For example, four levels of government are examining possible future uses of the now-abandoned Welland Canal, and a similar group has been established for the Lachine Canal.

URBAN TRANSPORTATION

Efficient transportation is critical to the quality of life in urban areas. In many cities, however, movement depends heavily on the private automobile, with the resulting traffic-clogged streets and fume-laden air. At the same time, non-drivers — the poor, the handicapped, the very old and the young — are

denied cheap and efficient transportation. Governments recognize that they will have to lend substantial assistance to make public transportation systems as convenient, comfortable, and efficient as the private car.

During 1974-75, the Ministry was involved with broad policy planning at the federal level as well as with specific urban transportation problems.

The Ministry carried out a variety of studies related to urban transport policies and problems, ranging from an investigation of the special transit needs of the handicapped and elderly in 10 major cities to studies for a new public transit network for downtown Quebec City.

At the federal level, the Ministry and the Ministry of Transport conjointly began a national transportation policy review. Extensive consultations took place between the provinces and the federal government (represented by the Ministry, the Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce and the Ministry of Transport) toward establishing the National Urban Transportation Development Corporation.

At the provincial-municipal level, the Ministry indirectly assisted municipalities through schemes like Vancouver's Livable Region Program, and Toronto-Scarborough's Light Rapid Transit System.

Urban life also is affected to a great extent by the large-scale transportation systems that connect cities and regions to each other and to the rest of the world. In Canada, the federal government exerts a major influence on national transportation through its jurisdiction over airport location, railway relocation, port expansion and the use of urban waterfronts. The Ministry was active in all these areas in the year under review, generally working closely with the Ministry of Transport, the National Harbours Board and other agencies. Many of the specific activities are described elsewhere in this report.

Especially noteworthy was the passage of the Railway Relocation and Crossing Act, proclaimed in

June, 1974. In past years, cities such as Ottawa and Saskatoon have derived major benefits from relocating their railway operations away from the downtown core to the fringe of the city. Other cities wished to follow their example and as a result the Railway Relocation and Crossing Act was enacted to provide the federal legislative authority and allow for financial assistance to cities considering the undertaking. Following proclamation of the Act, officials of the Ministry, the Ministry of Transport and the Canadian Transport Commission met provincial and city authorities to explain the Railway Relocation Program that had been developed under the Act.

In February, 1975, the Minister of State for Urban Affairs announced on his own behalf and that of the Minister of Transport that the City of Regina would be the first municipality to be given financial aid to undertake urban development and transportation planning in connection with railway relocation. By the end of the fiscal year, a number of other municipalities were preparing their applications for financial help and seeking the support of their provincial governments. Clearly, the relocation program will bring about significant urban improvement and have a major impact on the communities concerned. The Ministry will retain an important responsibility to ensure that the other federal programs are coordinated to take advantage of the opportunities the relocations present, and to provide maximum support for urban improvements sought by the municipalities.

URBAN IMPACT

Throughout the federal government, a wide array of programs, policies and proposals have important implications for the quality of city life. Many instances, such as land use and transportation, are elaborated elsewhere in this report. Part of the responsibility of the Ministry involves measuring the urban impact of actual or proposed federal programs and

policies. These assessments may be comprehensive reviews of existing policies or mathematical models designed to test the impacts of hypothetical policies. During 1974-75, a pilot study of the Macro-Urban Program Impact Model was carried out to test the usefulness of this mathematical model in carrying out urban research at the system-of-cities scale.

Work continued on an on-going National Transportation Policy-Urban Objectives Review, and the first Annual Review of the Senior Interdepartmental Committee on Urban Affairs examined federal urban programs against the government's urban objectives. These evaluations will serve as a critical base for on-going discussions between the Ministry and other federal and provincial agencies.

CORPORATE SERVICES

The corporate services for the Ministry include the Information Systems Directorate, the Personnel, Finance and Administration Branch and the Communications Branch.

The Information Systems Directorate continued to handle the Ministry's information processing needs. In the area of data management, the Directorate completed work on the first two phases of a proposed Data Directory System, a means of documenting data and information used within the Ministry for ready retrieval. Work was begun on examining the use and transfer of information technology at the municipal level. As part of this activity, the Directorate is participating in a project of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development that involves examining and comparing the use of information technology in urban management.

The Personnel, Finance and Administration Branch continued to provide centralized personnel, financial and other administrative support for the Minister. At the end of the fiscal year, Ministry staff numbered 301 fulltime employees with an additional

52 persons under personal service contracts. Operating expenditures during the year were approximately \$11.9 million. Contributions in support of urban planning and development projects of other levels of government and other coordinating bodies, and of institutions active in the area of urban management training and development, amounted to approximately \$2 million. An in-house language training unit with four teachers offered five types of language courses and monitor services, all of which were used by 100 students during the year.

The Communications Branch has two main functions: keeping the Ministry aware of emerging urban issues by providing background and briefing materials collected from a wide variety of sources including the news media, and informing the public of Ministry activities through the preparation and distribution of news releases, publications and films.

During the fiscal year, the Branch's communication capability was reinforced with audio-visual and graphics units, previously administered elsewhere in the Ministry. The first edition of the Directory of Urban Information Sources was compiled in 1974-75. It is a reference work which lists basic readings and reference tools, non-governmental organizations, university centres and institutes engaged in the various facets of urban affairs. The branch also undertook the editing and publication of seven volumes in a series of city profiles. Each volume is a comprehensive description of the political and administrative structures of a major Canadian city.

PRIORITIES AND PLANNING

The Priorities and Planning Group provided policy advice to the Secretary and the Executive Committee, and is charged with developing and implementing a Ministry planning process. A Strategic Planning Unit was formed during the fiscal year to undertake this latter responsibility.

The unit devised a variety of approaches, including familiarization briefings — films, pamphlets, graphs and charts; assistance in resource allocation decisions; the development of future prospectives; and strategic planning charts to depict the events, policies, programs or projects which must unfold in the future.

5 habitat:
united nations
conference on
human settlements,
vancouver, 1976

During the 1972 UN conference of the Human Environment in Stockholm, it was proposed by Canada that the UN hold a conference devoted exclusively to the topic of human settlements, and offered to act as host. Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements was subsequently ratified by the UN General Assembly and Canada's offer to serve as host was confirmed by Parliament. Since the Stockholm initiative Canada has been a tireless and successful advocate of the conference, both with other nations and with the United Nations General Assembly.

Two Secretariats were established to accommodate Canada's dual responsibilities toward Habitat, as participant and as host; the Canadian Participation Secretariat under the Ministry works closely with its counterpart, the Host Secretariat, in the Department of External Affairs. Canada's national preparations demand close consultation between the federal, provincial and territorial governments, as well as with many private agencies. At the federal level, a 31-department interdepartmental task force met monthly. All provincial and territorial governments were represented on a federal-provincial preparatory committee, and the provinces made significant commitments to Habitat preparations.

Extensive efforts were made during the year to spark the interest of the public in Habitat issues and encourage their contributions to the conference. A group representing 46 non-government organizations was formed to encourage and coordinate Habitat-related activities of the general community. In addition, a special school program was developed to encourage teachers and students to use settlements issues as a basis for classroom activities. A unique feature of Habitat, initiated at Canada's suggestion, will be audio-visual presentations by governments on specific human settlements problems and their possible solutions. Canada proposed four on the themes of Management of Urban Growth and Land Use; Design

Innovations for Settlements in Cold Climates; Governing Human Settlements; and Community Rejuvenation. All were accepted by the UN Secretariat and audio-visual presentations were begun using illustrations from across Canada.

